

Ocean Hall



Smithsonian
National Museum of Natural History



Call for Volunteer Docents

A new permanent exhibition about the ocean—the Natural History Museum's largest—opens September 2008. Developed in partnership with the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, the 23,000-square-foot Ocean Hall emphasizes the ocean as a vast global system that is essential to ALL life on Earth. Using hundreds of fossil and modern specimens and ethnographic artifacts from the Museum's extensive collections, high-definition underwater video footage and other multimedia, the exhibit explores the ancient, diverse, and constantly changing nature of the ocean, the long historical connections humans have had with it, and ways in which we are impacting the ocean today.

This is an exceptional opportunity to dive in and share your knowledge of and passion for the ocean with our visitors. As an Ocean Hall Docent you will highlight the organization, themes, and concepts of the exhibition to visitors, as well as engage visitors in hands-on activities with real objects.

What are the qualifications to be an Ocean Hall docent?

- Good oral communication skills, an enthusiasm for working with people of all ages, and a desire to gain new knowledge.
- Interest in science and/or the ocean recommended, but a background in science or teaching is not required.
- Minimum age 18, no maximum age!
- One-year commitment with available time on weekdays or weekends. (Weekday docents serve one, 2–3 hour shift per week; weekend docents serve one, 2–3 hour shift every other week.)
- Attendance at Museum orientation and training sessions. Training includes directed, independent study and research; introduction to object-based inquiry strategies and techniques; mentoring by experienced docents; lectures and demonstrations by Museum educators and research scientists; lab activities; and on-the-job experience.

Classroom training for Ocean Hall Docents starts in September 2008.

If you have questions about the Museum's docent programs, please contact Harold Banks. To apply, complete the online application, save it to your desktop, and either attach it to an email or print and FAX. Online Application: http://www.mnh.si.edu/education/edu_pdfs/volunteer_application.doc
Harold Banks: Email: banksh@si.edu; Phone: (202) 633-1075, FAX: (202) 786-2778.



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What Are the Benefits of Being a Docent?

- Inspiring visitors to explore and learn.
- Meeting people with similar interests.
- Training by Museum educators, curators, and research scientists.
- Developing museum teaching skills.
- 20% discount at all Smithsonian Museum shops and cafeterias.
- Earning hours for community service.
- Temporary parking permit on request.
- Recognition for service.
- Eligible for a scholarship or reduced tuition for adult classes offered by The Smithsonian Associates.
- Free tickets to IMAX® films.
- Invitations to special Museum programs and events.
- Curator-led tours of exhibitions and the Museum's research departments.
- Personal References provided upon request.
- Liability protection.

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